



Apalachee Audubon

Newsletter of the Apalachee Audubon Society, Inc.

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www.apalachee.org

BIRDERS DELIGHT WITH PETE DUNNE VISIT

The Tallahassee nature community is in for a treat with the visit of Pete Dunne for a series of activities that will highlight his talents. Apalachee Audubon, with sponsorship of Wild Birds Unlimited-TLH, is bringing Dunne to town for a series of events on the weekend of January 22nd. Dunne is Vice President for Natural History Information for the New Jersey Audubon Society, Director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, and the founder of the annual World Series of Birding, which raises thousands of dollars for bird-conservation projects. He is an expert birder, a gifted storyteller, a popular public speaker and one of America's preeminent nature writers. His articles have appeared in most major American birding publications, including *Birder's World*, *Birding*, *Bird Watcher's Digest*, and *Wild Bird*, as well as in *The New York Times* since 1987; he is also the author of twelve books including *Pete Dunne's Essential Field Guide Companion* and *Hawks in Flight*.

Dunne writes in the forward of *The Wind Masters: North American Birds of Prey* that "In stories, as in love, as in war, all is fair". With his unique style of storytelling, he will hold you captivated with fascinating facts, playful twists and lingering thoughts that in the end will leave you with a wealth of information and a smile knowing that you've just heard a great story!

Apalachee Audubon has three events planned with proceeds to benefit the chapter as well as Friends of Wakulla Springs.



Pete Dunne, author and director of the Cape May Bird Observatory, on the Cape May Hawkwatch platform. Courtesy Wikipedia Commons

- **Saturday, January 22nd—Meet and Greet** social to welcome Pete to town. Attendance is limited. 6:30 p.m. **\$50** (Includes a ticket for the January 23rd keynote address.)

- **Sunday, January 23rd—Keynote Address** at Tallahassee Community College at 4:00 p.m. Pete's topic will be "Small-headed Flycatcher. Seen Yesterday. He didn't leave his name—the rediscovery of an extinct species and how it became lost ... again" along with a book signing. Books will be available for purchase. Tickets are **\$10**.

- **Monday, January 24th—Boat Tour** at Wakulla Springs, 9:00 a.m. Pete will narrate on the historic boat ride at Wakulla Springs State Park with a different twist on the fabulous variety of birds, manatee and other animals that call Wakulla Springs home in the winter time. Attendance is limited. Boat tour is **\$20** and all proceeds benefit the Friends of Wakulla and Wakulla Springs State Park.

To purchase tickets, visit the Wild Birds Unlimited store, located on Governor's Square Blvd, or call (850)383-1238. More information is available at these web sites: www.tallahassee.wbu.com and www.apalachee.org.

All donations to Apalachee Audubon are tax-deductible under section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code.

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Join National Audubon Society and Apalachee Audubon!

For just \$20 a year you can be a member of both National Audubon and our local Apalachee Audubon chapter. Your membership will include *Audubon*, our bimonthly flagship publication. Each issue of this award-winning publication features beautiful photography and provocative journalism. Our chapter newsletter will keep you informed of local and statewide Audubon and other nature-related events.

You can pay for membership using a credit card by calling Audubon's toll free membership number. *(Please mention our chapter ID, E19, for AAS to get full credit for a new membership).*

1-800-274-4201

If you prefer to pay by check for an annual membership, send your \$20 check made payable to National Audubon Society and mail to:

**National Audubon Society
PO Box 422246
Palm Coast, FL 32142-2246**

Allow 4-6 weeks for arrival of your first issue of *Audubon*. The cost of membership is tax deductible except for \$7.50 (which is allocated to *Audubon* magazine).

Apalachee Audubon Society (AAS) 2010 – 2011 Officers and Board Members

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AAS is a 501(c)3 tax exempt organization. All contributions are tax deductible. Inquiries can also be sent to 1819 Doric Dr, Tallahassee, FL 32303.

Mission Statement: Protection of the environment through education, appreciation, and conservation.

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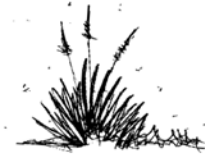
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AAS PROGRAM MEETING LOCATION

Historic Amtrak Station
 918 Railroad Avenue
 Tallahassee, Florida



*Electronic version of this newsletter
is available on the AAS web site.*

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: BUILDING A COMMUNITY OF CONSERVATION BY JULIE WRAITHMELL

Apalachee Audubon is welcoming the new year with a celebration of our community, and we hope that you will join in the fun.

In addition to our January program, we are hosting a special event weekend January 22-24. A VIP reception, speaking engagement, and special Wakulla Springs boat tour with renowned author, birder and storyteller Pete Dunne.

Generously underwritten by **Wild Birds Unlimited**, not only will these events be a wonderful opportunity for us to regroup after the holidays and welcome newcomers, but the revenues from ticket sales to the reception and lecture will fund Apalachee Audubon's conservation and education programs. Ticket proceeds from the special Wakulla Springs boat tour will support the Friends of Wakulla Springs' work to protect this ecological and economic treasure by renovating the signature tour boats to electric motors.

On Saturday February 19th, our members and supporters open their homes (or at least their yards) to the larger Tallahassee community, with Apalachee Audubon's signature event, the Wildlife-friendly Yard Tour. Tallahassee has a remarkable diversity of urban bird life, and those yards that provide food, water, and shelter for wildlife are rewarded in kind! Come enjoy some amazing birds, meet enthusiastic backyard conservationists, learn new plants and strategies for attracting wildlife, and most importantly, get inspired!

Through these events and our regular programming, Apalachee Audubon is building community—both a committed community of chapter members, as well as contributing to the environmental well-being of the community of which we are a part. Join in the fun and good works with us. These events—and indeed our entire chapter—are organized entirely by dedicated volunteers. It's amazing what a few committed conservationists can do! Make your new year's resolution to lend your talents to making our Tallahassee area a community of conservation.

AUDUBON ACADEMY IN GAINESVILLE, FLORIDA AT PARAMOUNT PLAZA FRIDAY-SUNDAY, MARCH 18-20, 2011

Chapters are Audubon's crucial link to influencing communities and government to protect Florida's birds, wildlife, and habitats. Our communities need the voice of Florida's 44 strong Audubon chapters to define and shape a better Florida. Now in its 7th year, Audubon Academy is designed to strengthen chapters by providing continuing education for chapter members in conservation, organization building and management. This event is by-the-chapters, for-the-chapters, and provides a unique opportunity for you to learn from and contribute to the long, proud history of grassroots Audubon leadership in Florida. Consider attending—whether you are looking to grow as a conservationist, leader or advocate, or simply cross-pollinate with chapter members elsewhere in the state facing similar challenges. Details will be available online at www.flaudubon.org/academy.html.

NEWSLETTER CHANGES

The print edition of the newsletter is now being published bimonthly. For timely notifications about field trips & other events, subscribe to the AAS email notification list via our web site:

apalachee.org/List_Serving.html

or you can join at

www.groups.google.com/group/apalachee-audubon

WINTER FIELD TRIPS

Chris Borg will be conducting field trips this winter, dates to be announced. To receive notifications about these trips, subscribe to the Apalachee Audubon mailing list or contact Chris directly.

Field Trip contact information

apalachee_audubon_tours@hotmail.com

or Phone: (850) 545-3982

INJURED EAGLES

NEED YOUR USED POSTAGE STAMPS!

Yes, it's true! The Audubon Center for Injured Birds of Prey (located at Maitland, Florida) collects used postage stamps and sells them to wholesalers for sale to collectors all over the world. All you have to do is cut postage stamps from your mail, leaving at least 1/4 inch of paper all around the stamp. (Or just bring the envelope and I will trim them.) Any postage stamp is useful—big, small, U.S., foreign—any postage stamp! There will be a box to collect them at Audubon meetings. If you have a lot of stamps, you can call to arrange for a pickup.

We appreciate your help.

If you have questions or want to arrange for a pickup, call **Eileen Boutelle** at (850)656-3346.

JANUARY PROGRAM SPEAKER: ROBERT MONTANARO **Critters, Cows, & Cowboys:** **A Photographic Exploration into the Wildlife and Work of a Florida Cattle Ranch**

Thursday, January 27th, 7:30 p.m. (Social at 7:00 p.m.)



This presentation illustrates the role ranches play in protecting Florida's diverse habitats while chronicling encounters with the many species of wildlife that call Treasure Hammock Ranch home. Additionally, the program reveals what a year of work is like on a Florida cattle ranch—from the stereotypical images of cowboys on horseback herding cattle to the more

realistic hot and dusty workday spent on foot moving cattle individually through the cow pens for vet checkups and myriad other activities.

Bob Montanaro is the administrative assistant for the Pelican Island Audubon Society. "Critters, Cows, & Cowboys" follows on the heels of his previous program, "Ospreys of Pelican Island: An Exploration into the Life of the Fish Hawk", which documents three years of Osprey nesting at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge.

For more information about both programs, visit www.lunarcabin.com.

FEBRUARY PROGRAM SPEAKER: JACK RUDLOE **Operation Noah's Ark** **A Rescue Plan for Some of the Gulf's Tiniest Residents** **Thursday, February 24th, 7:30 p.m. (Social at 7:00 p.m.)**



In response to the huge amount of oil that was released into the Gulf by the Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill, Gulf Specimen Laboratory's "Operation Noah's Ark" was created and has been working feverishly to preserve clean, healthy seawater and delicate coastal specimens so it will be possible to re-seed the coast should it become necessary.

Jack Rudloe is the founder of Gulf Specimen Marine Laboratory in Panacea, Florida and is the author of seven well-known books on Florida natural history and marine life. He achieved the first live exhibit of the world's largest isopod, the deep-sea giant sea roach and was instrumental in the New York Aquarium's exhibit of the giant Surinam Toadfish, also a first. He has traveled to Malaysia and The People's Republic of China as a representative of the U.S. International Trade Commission to develop fisheries cooperative agreements.

14TH ANNUAL GREAT BACKYARD BIRD COUNT

by Fran Rutkovsky

The 14th Great Backyard Bird Count will take place **Friday-Monday, February 18-21, 2011**. This annual event provides a "winter snapshot" of the birds of the United States and Canada and is free and open to all participants. Count birds on any or all of the four-day event and enter the data online. Despite the title, the counts can be conducted anywhere birds are seen or heard. In 2010 a record 97,300 bird checklists were submitted from all 50 states in the U.S. and across Canada.

During the event, the online data is updated many times a day, and you can keep up with what birds are being reported where (click on "Explore Data"). Check out the Top Ten lists to see what's happening in your location or any other area. In 2010 Florida was in the Top Ten lists for most checklists, most species, and most birds. Tallahassee was #4 nationally in Localities Submitting the Most Checklists and #9 nationally for Most Species. Let's do it again this year!

Another part of the event is the GBBC Photo Contest where you may submit images that you take during the weekend. All photo participants are entered in a drawing for prizes. Local AAS member, Glenda Simmons, received Honorable Mention in February 2010 for her photograph of an Eastern Bluebird in the Composition category.

Go to www.birdcount.org for instructions, previous years' data and to explore, in real time, what is being reported from your own town or anywhere in the United States and Canada. The GBBC is a joint project of the National Audubon Society and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology with Canadian partner Bird Studies Canada. It also receives support from Wild Birds Unlimited.

WILDLIFE-FRIENDLY YARDS TOUR, FEBRUARY 19TH: MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

For the fourth year, Apalachee Audubon will host a Backyard Wildlife Tour, showing visitors how five selected homeowners attract birds and other wildlife to their yards. Planners Pam Flynn and Fred Dietrich have found the following people to host visitors on Saturday, February 19th, from 10:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.: Mary Huggins and Susan Teisciero, Glenda Simmons, Margaret and Tom Clark, Janeen Langley, and the fifth to be announced soon. Each yard features its own unique habitat and 'specialties' (hummingbirds, bluebirds, etc.).

Beginning February 1st, those wishing to go on the tour may purchase tickets for **\$10** apiece at either Native Nurseries or Wild Birds Unlimited. They will receive a map showing the locations of the yards, and a wristband, which indicate that they have paid. At each home Apalachee Audubon volunteers will welcome visitors and provide useful materials about attracting and feeding birds. This year we will also make available information about native plants that attract insects, who in turn attract birds who need insects to feed their young.

Spread the word! We thank the hosts who will welcome us to their yards, and look forward to seeing you! If you haven't been on a tour before, you will find it a delightful way to spend quality time and learn more about planning and planting for wildlife.

NOTE: We need volunteers for this event to greet visitors. Contact Ann Bruce if you are interested in volunteering for yard duty. Email: annbruce7@gmail.com, Phone: Home—(850) 224-4760 or Cell—(850) 766-3061.



Visitors taking in the sights at Jim Stevenson's backyard during the 2010 Wildlife-friendly Yard Tour.

Photo by Kathleen Carr

RIO GRANDE VALLEY BIRDING FESTIVAL *by Bill Phelan*

I found my first life bird of the trip (a Bronzed Cowbird) under the rental car at the Harlingen airport. I found two more (stunning views of White-tailed Kites and White-tailed Hawk) within an hour of leaving the airport. And the birding festival would not even start until the next day. If you want to see western birds, south Texas birds, or Mexican birds you have not seen before, and see them in just a few days, try the Rio Grande Valley Birding Festival in Harlingen, Texas.

Every November, the RGV Festival offers guided field trips to the many birding sites of the "World Birding Center" —a coalition of state parks, county and municipal parks, national wildlife refuges, and private ranches that provide habitat for south Texas endemics and Mexican migrants. Birders travel in buses or vans to the birding sites where they divide into smaller groups for bird watching with local and nationally known experts. In the afternoons, there are birding and butterfly workshops and lectures.

The first day of the festival offered a "Big Day" when my group (one of four) found 108 species between 6:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. On the last day, I was in a "Chase Van" where we looked for the most unusual species of the festival—we found the Crimson-collared Grosbeak, the Tropical Parula (both are Mexican birds) and a Fulvous Whistling Duck that had overstayed its Texas visit. In the days between, I saw many South Texas endemics including: Green Jays, Kiskadees, Plain Chachalacas, White-tipped Dove, Red-billed Pigeon, Tropical and Couch's Kingbirds, Red-crowned Parrot, Aplomado Falcon, and Least Grebes.

On the Upper Rio Grande trip, we found all three species of local orioles (Hooded, Altamira and Audubon's) within 10 minutes. We also saw all three species of kingfishers (ringed, belted and green), dozens of Neotropic Cormorants, three Gray Hawks, and many of the above endemics.



A Kiskadee perched on a fence. See the rest of Bill's photos on page 6. (Online edition only)

photo by Bill Phelan

Although two prime birding spots, Bentsen SP and Santa Ana NWR, had closed most of their acreage because of recent flooding, Estero Llano Grande SP provided good looks at the kingbirds, Buff-bellied Hummingbird, Ruddy Ground Dove and Vermilion Flycatcher, and many others.

The Festival occurs every year, in mid-November, and is well attended by birders from around the country (one was from Wales, UK). For more info:

www.rgvbirdfest.com

Bill Phelan is a member of Apalachee Audubon. If you would like to share a birding experience, email your story to kcarr@nasw.org or call (850) 322-7910.



PHOTOS BY BILL PHELAN

Left Top: Green Jay

Right Top: Kiskadee

Left Bottom: Couch's Kingbird

Right Bottom: Vermillion Flycatcher





Apalachee Audubon
 P.O. Box 1237
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2010-2011 THURSDAY PROGRAM DATES

- January 27, 2011
- February 24
- March 24
- April 28

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APALACHEE AUDUBON SOCIETY CALENDAR: JANUARY-FEBRUARY 2011

Social begins at 7:00, meeting at 7:30 p.m. Located at the historic Amtrak Station, 918 Railroad Avenue—map on page 2. For more information, call (850)510-4877 or visit: www.apalachee.org

Chapter/Audubon Events

January

- 22-24 **Pete Dunne Visit:** Three days of events with this author and renowned birder. *Details on page 1.*
- 27 **AAS Program Meeting:** Robert Montanaro will give his presentation, Critters, Cows, & Cowboys. *Details on page 4.*

February

- 18-21 **Great Backyard Bird Count:** *Details on page 4.*
- 19 **Wildlife-friendly Yard Tour:** *Details on page 5.*
- 24 **AAS Program Meeting:** Jack Rudloe will talk about Operation Noah's Ark. *Details on page 4.*

March

- 18-20 **Audubon Academy:** Meets in Gainesville, FL at Paramount Plaza. *Details on page 3.*

Related Events

February & March

- 9 **2nd Wednesday Reading/Discussion Group:** Meet at 7:00 p.m. at the Atlanta Bread Company on Governor's Square Blvd. For more information, contact Melissa at birdingtrefrog@gmail.com.



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